

Nicolae CEAUSESCU
(Phonetic: chowSHESSkoo)

ROMANIA

***President; Secretary General,
Romanian Communist Party***

***Addressed as:
Mr. President***



The preeminent political figure in Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu has dominated the country since he became Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965. Since then he has gathered the remaining reins of institutionalized power within his grasp, becoming Chairman of the State Council (Chief of State) in 1967, Chairman of the Defense Council and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces in 1969, and President of the country in 1974. The most autocratic leader in the Warsaw Pact, Ceausescu has a highly personalized ruling style characterized by a growing "cult of personality." He maintains control of the party and state structures by moving officials from job to job to prevent them from building independent power bases.

An ardent nationalist, Ceausescu has had some success in extricating Romania from Soviet hegemony. He has adopted semi-independent positions on international issues and has expanded his country's relations with non-Communist countries around the world, including the United States. Ceausescu is sensitive, however, to what he perceives as US interference in Romania's internal affairs, particularly in the area of human rights.

Ceausescu, 64, is shrewd and fast thinking.

He does not speak English.

Ceausescu's wife, Elena, holds major party and state positions and is considered by most Western observers to be second in power in Romania only to her husband.

CR M 82-15314
20 September 1982